

## Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA) 2016 Higher Standards Survey

Report to TFMA Board from the TFMA Higher Standards Committee, September 7, 2016

### **Background**

In 2004, Charlie Hastings, City Engineer for the City of Kerrville, and Roy Sedwick, TFMA Executive Director, launched a statewide Freeboard Survey. The purpose of the survey was to document higher floodplain management standards that have been adopted and enforced by Texas cities and counties and to provide this information to others to encourage statewide adoption of higher standards. The 2004 Freeboard Survey was a major success and the survey was renamed the Higher Standards Survey. In 2005, Roy Sedwick coordinated with Mike Howard, Texas NFIP State Coordinator, LCRA and others to create an annual survey event. The Higher Standards Survey has been repeated annually since 2004 with annual reports to the TFMA membership at the annual TFMA Conference. The annual TFMA Higher Standards Survey is summarized into an excel spreadsheet and posted on the TFMA website ([www.tfma.org](http://www.tfma.org)) to allow public access and to provide a research tool for Texas cities and counties that wish to adopt higher floodplain management standards.

In 2015, higher floodplain management standards achieved a new level of importance with EO 13690, Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, that mandates that all Federal investments, in or affecting floodplains, require that structures and facilities be elevated a minimum of +2' above BFE or +3' for "critical" facilities.

### **Texas State Mitigation Plan**

In 2008, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (DEM) incorporated the TFMA Higher Standards Survey into the Texas State Mitigation Plan to document higher standard floodplain management measures that have been adopted and enforced by Texas cities and counties.

### **2016 TFMA Higher Standards Survey**

In 2014, the TFMA Executive Office converted the Higher Standards Survey into an online "Survey Monkey" format. This improved format attracted 140 communities to participate in 2015 and 107 have submitted so far in 2016. Many communities choose not to resubmit survey data if there have not been significant changes, therefore a total of 321 Texas cities and counties have submitted survey data in recent surveys.

The 2016 TFMA Higher Standards Survey is summarized below:

2016 Survey Responses			CRS Communities	Community Adopted Freeboard	
Total Communities	Cities	Counties		Existing Conditions 1' or more	Fully Developed Conditions

321	250	71	63	269	142
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**The TFMA 2016 Higher Standard Survey shows:**

- 26% (321) of 1,240 NFIP communities in Texas responded to the Higher Standards Survey
- 84% (269) of responders require +1’ or more Freeboard for new development
- 44% (142) of responders require +1’ or more Freeboard based on fully developed conditions
- 83% (263) of responders require detention
- 37% of responders require mitigation of downstream impacts
- 18% of responders require development to be setback from the Floodway Boundary
- 83% of responders require a study to establish the BFE and floodway in Zone A
- 36% (115) of responders require Zone X Freeboard (1’ to 3’ above NG and above the nearest street)
- 78% of responders require Elevation Certificates
- 83% of responders have community floodplain administrators that are CFM’s

The complete 2016 TFMA Higher Standards Survey, in excel spreadsheet format, is being tabulated by the Higher Standards Committee and will be available for posting on the TFMA website to describe in detail higher standard floodplain management measures that were adopted by the 321 communities that participated in the summary.

**TFMA’s Higher Standards Guide:**

The TFMA Higher Standards Guide was prepared by the TFMA Higher Standards Committee as a “how to” guide and a companion to the Texas Quick Guide posted on the TWDB website and the TFMA Higher Standards Survey. The 2015 TFMA Higher Standards Survey is posted on line at:

[http://www.floods.org/ace-files/documentlibrary/committees/3-13\\_Higher\\_Standards\\_in\\_Floodplain\\_Management2.pdf](http://www.floods.org/ace-files/documentlibrary/committees/3-13_Higher_Standards_in_Floodplain_Management2.pdf)

**Uses for the TFMA Higher Standard Survey:**

Communities can review the survey summary, in excel spreadsheet format, to identify and evaluate higher standards adopted by other communities to help update floodplain management programs.

This survey will be provided to the Texas Water Development Board, Texas NFIP State Coordinating Agency, the Texas Division of Emergency Management (DEM), Texas Emergency Management Agency, and FEMA Region 6.

**Thirteen (13) Communities participated in the Survey for the first time in 2016:**

Austin County	Belton	Leon Valley
Ellis County	Dayton	Rockwall
Refugio County	Holiday Lakes	Rockport
	Village of the Hills	Schertz
	Hunter's Creek Vil.	Waxahachie

**Billionaire Club:**

Texas is no longer #1, thank God! The NFIP Loss Statistics posted on [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) lists Country-Wide NFIP paid claims from January 1, 1978 to June 30, 2016. States with more than \$1B paid claims:

#1	LA	\$16.936B	#5	FL	\$3.893B	#9	NC	\$1.014B
#2	TX	\$6.502B	#6	MS	\$3.015B			
#3	NJ	\$5.873B	#7	PA	\$1.165B			
#4	NY	\$5.276B	#8	AL	\$1.021B			

On a sad note, the top 9 states account for 84% (\$44.69B) of all NFIP paid flood insurance claims in the US since 1978. Texas accounts for 12.23% of all paid flood insurance claims.

2016 TFMA Higher Standards Survey was compiled by the TFMA Higher Standards Committee.

*John P. Ivey*

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